

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request examination in view of the above amendments. Claims 20-41 remain pending in the case. Claims 20, 28-29 and 31-34 are rejected. Claims 21-27, 30 and 35-41 are objected to. Claims 21, 29, 30 and 35 are cancelled herein without prejudice. Claims 20, 22, 28, 34 and 36 are amended herein. No new matter has been added.

DOUBLE PATENTING REJECTION

Claims 20-41 are rejected under the judicially created (nonstatutory) doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over Claims 1-19 of U.S. Patent No. 6,654,848. A terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR §1.321 is being submitted concurrent with the instant response, thereby obviating the double patenting rejection.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the indication that Claims 21, 30 and 35 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of their base Claims and any intervening Claims. As a result of the claim amendments added herein in light of the notice of allowable subject matter, Applicants respectfully assert that independent Claim 20 that is amended herein to include the limitations of Claim 21, independent Claim 28 that is amended herein to include the limitations of Claims 29 and 30, and independent Claim 34 that is amended herein to include the limitations of

Claim 35 are now in condition for allowance. Furthermore, Applicants respectfully assert that Claims 22-27 that depend from allowable independent Claim 20, Claims 31-33 that depend from allowable independent Claim 28, and Claims 36-41 that depend from allowable independent Claim 34 are now in condition for allowance as they are dependent on an allowable claim.

35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 20, 28, 29 and 31-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by United States Patent 6,278,654 by Roohparvar. Applicants have herein incorporated the subject matter of Claim 21 into independent Claim 20, the subject matter of Claims 29 and 30 into independent Claim 28, and the subject matter of Claim 35 into independent Claim 34. Claims 21, 30 and 35 were cited as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of its base Claim and any intervening Claims. As a result, Claims 20, 28 and 34 are now allowable over the prior art and a discussion of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) rejection is moot at this time.

Claims 22-27 depend from allowable independent Claim 20, Claims 31-33 depend from allowable independent Claim 28, and Claims 36-41 depend from allowable independent Claim 34. Hence, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 22-27, 31-33 and 36-41 are now allowable, and a discussion of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) rejection is moot at this time.

CONCLUSION

Based on the arguments and amendments presented above, Applicants respectfully assert that Claims 20, 22-28, 31-34 and 36-41 overcome the rejections of record and, therefore, Applicants respectfully solicit allowance of these Claims.

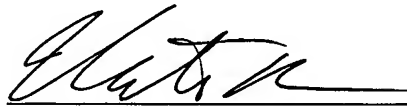
Applicants respectfully assert that the present Application is in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Patent Application.

Please charge our deposit account No. 23-0085 for any unpaid fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 30 Nov, 2004



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